

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments to the claims and the following comments.

In the Office Action dated January 30, 2007, claims 7, 9, 10, 22, and 31-40 were examined. Claims 7, 22, and 31-40 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as allegedly obvious over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0030393 to Flannery (the "Flannery publication") in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,974,122 to Shaw (the "Shaw patent"). Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indicated allowability of claims 9 and 10.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's rejections of claims. Nevertheless, to advance the prosecution of this application and thereby avoid further delays, Applicants have now amended independent claims 7 and 31 to define the invention with greater particularity and, thereby, to further distinguish over the cited references, including the Flannery publication and the Shaw patent.

Fourteen claims are presented for reconsideration, including allowed independent claim 9 and its dependent claims 10; amended independent claim 7 and its dependent claim 22; and amended independent claim 31 and its dependent claims 32-40. All of claims 7, 9, 10, 22, and 31-40 should now be allowed.

In rejecting independent claims 7 and 31, the Examiner asserted as follows:

Flannery teaches a table, an opaque tabletop, a dealer, a plurality of player positions, a translucent planar window with a light source (see figure 1 and [0023]. Flannery, fails to teach that his light window extends around the game table. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to place the light source [sic – window?] anywhere desired or expedient on the table. Such would be considered a design issue and would present little or no difficulty to one of ordinary skill.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's assertion. As Applicants previously have pointed out, Shaw's luminaire and Flannery's casino game are entirely incompatible with each other. Regardless, as discussed below, Applicants invention is distinguishable from Flannery's casino game even if it were to be modified in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

The Flannery application discloses a casino game having a playing surface 14 with a betting area 20. The betting area includes a large number of betting spaces 22 stacked in a pyramidal group 24 and a rectangular group 26. Each betting space 22 is formed of a translucent material and is separately illuminated by a light located beneath the playing surface 14. A panel of switches 47 is controllably operated by a croupier 16, to selectively illuminate the individual betting spaces 22. A betting space 22 is withdrawn from the betting field by extinguishing the light beneath it.

In rejecting independent claims 7 and 31, the Examiner has implicitly asserted that Flannery's individual betting spaces 22 correspond to Applicants' claimed "light window" and that the individual lights located beneath those individual betting spaces 22 correspond to Applicants' claimed "light source." The Examiner's implicit assertion is incorrect. Flannery's lighting system is configured merely to highlight selected betting spaces and thereby show the progress of the game. This is an important feature of Flannery's lighting system; it would defeat the entire purpose of Flannery's casino game for the lights to switched on *continuously*.

This contrasts with the light source of Applicants' invention, which is configured to project light *continuously* through the translucent light window. To highlight this distinction, Applicants have now amended independent claims 7 and 31 to specify that the light source is configured to project light *continuously* through the light window.

It would not have been obvious to have modified Flannery's casino game to provide this feature of continuous illumination, because that would defeat the entire purpose of

Appl. No. 10/617,477
Amendment dated April 25, 2007
Reply to Office Action mailed January 30, 2007

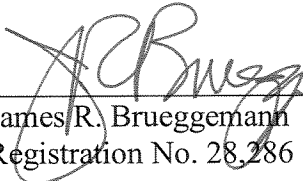
the betting spaces 22. Selectively illuminating individual betting spaces is necessary to show the progress of the game.

For this reason alone, independent claims 7 and 31 define a nonobvious advance over the disclosure of the Flannery application, even if it were to be modified in view of the alleged teachings of the Shaw patent. The § 103(a) rejection of claims 7 and 31, and their respective dependent claims 22 and 32-40, should therefore now be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments to the claims, this application should now be in condition for allowance. Issuance of a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes that a further telephone conference with the Applicants' undersigned attorney might expedite the prosecution of this application, she is invited to call at the telephone number indicated below. Any additional fees due in connection with the filing of this Amendment should be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-1853.

Respectfully submitted,
SHEPPARD, MULLIN, RICHTER & HAMPTON LLP

By: _____


James R. Brueggemann
Registration No. 28,286

333 South Hope Street, 48th Floor
Los Angeles, California 90071
(213) 620-1780 x4156